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GIFTS OF INTUITION, INNER GUIDANCE AND THE MONROE INSTITUTE

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One Monday each month we're delighted to share with you a Monroe Mission Moment—a glimpse into how someone's life is different because of their connection to powerful tools and experiences at the Monroe Institute. It is our great pleasure to share Alyssa Citarella's mission moment with you here.

We all have gifts. Special, unique talents we are meant to express in this life. For years I resisted my gifts, until one day back in 2010 when I was three months pregnant with my second daughter.

My husband had just left his corporate job to start his own business and my principal called me into her office to tell me they were eliminating my position. I was offered another position in the district, but the kicker was, that was a position I had willingly left four years earlier, and I didn't want to go back. I was devastated, but I tried to make the best of it. We needed the salary, we needed the benefits, but I felt trapped.

I was struggling with postpartum depression, anxiety and major sleep issues. While I loved my large house, my nice car and taking beach vacations, something seemed off. It was as if I was on a treadmill, trying to keep busy so I didn't have to sit with my own thoughts for too long. It was almost as if I were trying to outrun them and we all know how that turns out. ;)

As a child, I used to pull my wagon around the neighborhood filled with first aid supplies. I always wanted to help people. I was very sensitive and intuitive. However, I quickly learned that, at least in my household, these were not beneficial traits. "You're too sensitive Alyssa," was a phrase I heard often growing up. Better to shut that side of me down, hide it away deep inside, close that door and throw away the key. And that's what I did for many years.

When my husband quit his job to launch a startup, he used his flexible schedule to set aside time to work his way through the CD version of “Gateway Experience.” He had read Robert A. Monroe’s books as a young adult before we met.

Open to trying anything to feel better, I said Yes when my husband offered to introduce me to the Monroe Institute through an Outreach program in New York City. He was excited to have someone to explore with and we both enjoyed the time together away from the kids.

Allyn Evans offered the weekend workshop at One Spirit Learning Alliance. As soon as I was introduced to the specially-designed binaural beat audio-guided technology I was hooked. I found it so easy and simple to slip into a relaxed meditative space.

I had tried breath work and had attempted mediation before, but I just couldn’t stick with it. I asked Allyn what recordings might be best to reawaken my intuitive abilities, to open up that door to my inner child. She recommended Patty Ray Avalon’s “Inner States: Dawning of Awareness,” and so began my journey into the exploration of consciousness and the rediscovery of my gifts.

I started listening to these recordings on a daily basis, hoping it would help put me in touch with my intuition. My interest in exploring all aspects of consciousness was piqued and I attended various workshops, watched documentaries and read tons and tons of books.

I was introduced to tapping, the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), and started to dabble in Reiki. When the shooting at Sandy Hook school happened, not far from where I was teaching, I was awake enough to know that this was a sign for me that things needed to change. That I needed to change. I quit my teaching job altogether; walked away from a great salary, benefits and pension. Everyone thought I was crazy.

One day while journaling at the beach, trying to figure out what to do with the rest of my life, I thought I would try something different. I decided to write down a question in my journal and write down whatever answer came to me.

Turns out, I am really good at connecting with my higher self and the universe.

Next, I tried doing it for other people and was shocked to discover how well it worked. I now love helping other people connect with their intuition, helping them get answers to their deepest questions and also helping them discover tools to gain the confidence they need to do it on their own.

In May of 2012 I visited the campus of Monroe for the first time for my “Gateway Voyage” program. My facilitators might as well have been rock stars. They were Scott Taylor (now the President and Executive Director of Monroe) and Patty Ray Avalon (whose recordings I had now listened to daily for over a year).

From the first exercise in my CHEC unit I felt like I was home.

I instantly recognized the Focus levels we began exploring as the states I had been entering while I was meditating and journaling. While on campus I had shared dreams with some of my other Gateway classmates.

During one exercise I received a very distinct message to share with a young classmate who had just dropped out of school. The message was for him to continue to follow his hands-on work with permaculture; that one day it was going to “save the world.”

How I wish Monroe had a dedicated social network so we could have stayed in touch. I would love to know how my fellow classmates' lives have changed as a result of the “Gateway Voyage.” How great would a 10-year Gateway reunion be in 2022?

Honestly, I’m not sure my fellow classmates would even recognize my life now. My husband’s and my exposure to Monroe has totally changed the trajectory of our lives.

We have awakened to the fact that we are more than our physical bodies and that we can manifest our reality. This awakening led our family down a path less traveled, of living a more consciously created life.

By 2016 we had sold everything we owned, pulled our girls out of school and set sail from Connecticut to the Bahamas. Since then we have spent the past 4 years sailing and homeschooling (boatschooling) our children. From this experience a vision was born. A vision of a world where we are surrounded by helpers.

Living on a sailboat, we have experienced first-hand a culture where helping others is the norm, where fellow boaters form strong community bonds. My husband and I were so inspired by this that we wanted to bring this kind of culture into the mainstream. The result is a quarantine project called Rippl.me that my husband and I launched on the Summer Solstice.

Our mission with this platform is to start a kindness revolution by bringing the pay-it-forward process into the "app" age. The platform combines paying forward acts of kindness with charity donations at each step in the chain to create a ripple effect that grows quickly into a huge impact.

After launching, we noticed pretty quickly that this would be a great fundraising tool for all kinds of charities, especially in the current environment where traditional face-to-face fundraising events are off the table. Our plan is that charities, including the Monroe Institute, will benefit from this platform.

In my eyes, learning never stops and my explorations have continued. I have become certified in Reiki and Shamanic Healing. I have studied Sound Healing and have been back to Monroe for two more residential retreats: “Serving Spirit 1” and “Serving Spirit 2” with Suzanne Giesemann.

My husband and I were even getting ready to launch a traveling Monroe Institute Local Chapter Network (LCN) from our boat in the Bahamas when COVID started. I don’t know what the future will hold, but I do know that I am connected and supported by the universe. We all are.

Monroe helped me reconnect with my intuition, my inner guidance system. It provided me with tools that allowed me to tap back into that creative side of myself that I somehow seemed to have left behind in childhood. Through experience, I now KNOW that I am more than my physical body. I have had experiences that defy logic and can only be explained by the fact that we are all connected and we are all more than our physical bodies.

I will be forever grateful to Bob Monroe and the Monroe Institute for giving me the key to open the door to explore expanded consciousness.